

The respect and esteem for the Qur'ān which is mandatory for someone who recites and bears the Qur'ān

In *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*, at-Tirmidhī al-Ḥakīm said, “Part of respect for the Qur'ān is to only touch it when pure. Part of respect for it is to recite it in a state of purity. Part of respect for it is to use the tooth-stick (*siwāk*), clean between the teeth and make the mouth clean as the mouth is its pathway. Yazīd ibn Abī Mālik said, ‘Your mouths are the pathways of the Qur'ān, so purify and clean them as much as you can.’

“Part of respect for it is to dress as you would dress to visit the amir because you are speaking privately. Part of respect for it is to face *qibla* to recite it. When Abū'l-‘Āliyya recited he would put on a turban, dress, wear a mantle and face *qibla*. Part of respect for it is to rinse your mouth when you spit. Shu‘ba reported from Abū Ḥamza from Ibn ‘Abbās that he had a spittoon in front of him and when he spat, he would rinse his mouth and then begin recitation. Whenever he spat, he rinsed. Part of respect for it is that when you yawn, you should stop reciting, because when one recites, one is addressing and conversing with the Lord. Yawning is from Shayṭān. Mujāhid said, ‘When you yawn while reciting the Qur’ān, stop reciting out of respect until you stop yawning.’ ‘Ikrima said, ‘By that he meant to respect the Qur’ān.’

“Part of respect for it is to seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shayṭān when starting to recite it. You should say ‘In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful’ when beginning to recite it from the first *sūra* or from wherever you start. Part of respect for it is that, when you begin to recite it, you should not stop for a time to speak to people without need. Part of respect for it is that you should not stop reciting it when someone interrupts you by speaking to you and mix recitation with your reply. That is because when you do that, you remove the effectiveness of the formula of seeking refuge which you uttered at the beginning. Part of respect for it is to recite it deliberately, slowly and carefully.

“Part of respect for it is to deploy your mind and intelligence in understanding what is addressed to you. Part of respect for it is to stop at an *āyat* of promise and have hope in Allah and ask Him for His bounty, and to stop at an *āyat* of warning and seek refuge with Allah from the threat. Part of respect for it is to stop at its metaphors and visualise them. Part of respect for it is to investigate its unusual words. Part of respect for it is to give every letter its due so that the words are fully articulated and then you will receive ten good deeds for every letter.

“Part of respect for it is to end its recitation by proclaiming the truthfulness of its Lord and testifying to its delivery by His Messenger and testifying that that is true. You say, ‘Our Lord has

spoken the Truth and His Messengers conveyed it and we testify to that. O Allah, make us among the witnesses to the Truth, establishing justice.’ Then you make supplication.

“Part of respect for it is that when you recite, you do not take *āyats* piecemeal from each *sūra* and recite them. It is related to us that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, passed by Bilal who was reciting a little from each *sūra* and he commanded him to recite the entire *sūra*.

“Part of respect for it is that when you put down a copy of the Qur’ān, you do not leave it open and you do not put any other book on top of it. It should always be on top of any other books, be they books of knowledge or other books. Part of respect for it is that when you recite, you put it in your lap or on top of something in front of you and do not put it on the ground. Part of respect for it is not to erase the board it is written on with spit, but rather use water. Part of respect for it is that when it is washed with water you avoid impurities from various places and in the places where it is put. That washing is respect. Some of the *Salaf* before us used to use that water to heal themselves. Part of respect for it is to not take a page when it is worn out and brittle out of fear for the writing. That is great coarseness. It should be erased with water.

“Part of respect for it is to not let a day pass without looking at least once at the Qur’ān. Abū Mūsā used to say, ‘I am ashamed not to look once a day at the contract of my Lord.’ Part of respect for it is to give the eyes their share of it. The eye leads to the self. Between the self and the breast is a veil and the Qur’ān is in the breast. When you recite it by heart the ear listens and conveys it to the self. When you look at its writing, the eye and the ear both convey it. That is more likely to achieve the conveyance. Then the eye has its share just as the ear does. Zayd ibn Aslam reported from ‘Aṭā’ ibn Yasār from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, ‘Give the eyes their portion of worship.’ They asked. ‘Messenger of Allah, what is their portion of worship?’ He replied, ‘To look at the Qur’ān and reflect on it and study its wonders.’ Makhḥūl reported from ‘Ubāda ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah

bless him and grant him peace, said, 'The best worship of my community is to read the Qur'ān with the eyes.'

"Part of respect for it is not to resort to it when offered worldly goods. It is reported ... that Ibrāhīm [an-Nakhā'ī] used to dislike to resort to any of the Qur'ān when he was offered worldly goods. That is like saying to a man who comes to you, '*You have arrived at the pre-ordained time, Mūsā,*' (20:40) and like saying, '*Eat and drink with relish for what you did before in days gone by*' (69:24) when food is served, and other such things. Part of respect for it is not to say *Sūrat an-Naḥl*, *Sūrat al-Baqara* and *Sūrat an-Nisā*', but to say, 'The *sūra* in which such-and-such is mentioned.' (This, however, is contrary to the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, 'If anyone recites the two *āyats* from the end of *Sūrat al-Baqara* at night, they will be enough for him.') (al-Bukhārī and Muslim from 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd)

"Part of respect for it is to not invert its order as some teachers of children do in order to show off cleverness and fluency. That is opposition to Allah. Part of respect for it is to not deepen its recitation as is done by those obstinate innovators who intensify the pronunciation of the *hamza* and pronounce words with affectation. That is an innovation which *Shayṭān* suggested to them which they accepted. Part of respect for it is not to recite it using musical tunes like the tunes of the people of depravity nor with the quavering of the Christians nor chanting of the monks. All of that is deviation.

"Part of respect for it is to make its letters bold. Abū Ḥukayma reported that he used to copy out the Qur'ān in Kufa. 'Alī passed by him, inspected his writing and ordered, 'Make your pen thicker.' 'So I took the pen and cut off part of it and then wrote while 'Alī was standing and looking at my writing. He said, 'Like that. Give light to it as Allah gave it light.'"

"Part of respect for it is not to compete in loudness in recitation so that it becomes spoiled for him and he hates what he hears and it becomes like a contest. Part of respect for it is not to argue or quarrel about its recitations or say to a person, 'It is not like that.' Perhaps that recitation is a sound and permitted one and then you would be denying the Book of Allah.

“Part of respect for it is not to recite it in the market or in places of clamour, worthless talk, and the places where fools congregate. Do you not see that Allah Almighty mentioned the slaves of the All-Merciful and praised them because, when they pass by worthless talk, they pass by it with dignity? (cf. 25:72) This is about simply passing by those engaged in worthless talk. So how could they recite the Qur’ān in the midst of worthless talk and a gathering of fools?

“Part of respect for it is not to use it as a pillow or lean on it or throw it to someone when he wants it to be passed to him.

“Part of respect for it is not to make it small. ... It is reported that ‘Alī said, ‘Do not make the Qur’ān small.’ It is related that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb saw a small Qur’ān in the hand of a man and asked, ‘Who wrote it?’ ‘I did,’ he replied, and then ‘Umar struck him with his whip and said, ‘Esteem the Qur’ān.’ It is related that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, forbade people to say, ‘a little mosque or a little Qur’an’ (using the diminutive).

“Part of respect for it is not to adorn it with gold or write it in gold so that it is mixed with the adornment of this world. Mughīra related that Ibrāhīm disliked adorning the Qur’ān or writing it with gold or putting marks at the beginning of *āyats* or making it small. It is related from Abū’d-Dardā’ that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, ‘When you adorn your mosque and decorate your Qur’ān, then ruin is upon you.’ When Ibn ‘Abbās saw a Qur’ān adorned with silver he observed, ‘You tempt the thief with it. Its adornment is inside it.’

“Part of respect for it is that it should not be written on the ground or on a wall as is done in modern mosques.... It is reported that ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz said, ‘The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, passed by some writing on the ground and said to a lad of the tribe of Hudhayl, ‘What is this?’ He replied, ‘It is from the Book of Allah. A Jew wrote it.’ He said, ‘May Allah curse the one who did this. Only put the Book of Allah in its proper place.’ Muḥammad ibn az-Zubayr said that ‘Umar ibn

‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz saw a son of his writing the Qur’ān on a wall and beat him.

“Part of respect for it is that when its writing is washed for treating an illness, it should not be poured on a rubbish heap or in a place of impurity or in a place where people walk, but in a place where people do not walk, or a hole should be dug in a pure place so that it can be poured into it, or it can be poured into a large river.

“Part of respect for it is that, whenever someone completes the recitation of the entire Qur’ān, he recites some of the beginning so that it does not have the form of something abandoned. That is why when the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, finished reciting, he would recite about five *āyats* from the beginning so that it would not be in an abandoned form. Ibn ‘Abbās said that a man came and asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, which action is best?’ He replied, ‘You must have the embarking state.’ ‘What is the embarking state?’ he asked. He replied, ‘The one with the Qur’ān who starts from its beginning until he reaches its end and then starts at the beginning. Whenever he alights, he immediately travels on.’

It is recommended to gather your family when you finish the Qur’ān. Al-Anbārī reported ... from Qatāda that when Anas ibn Mālīk finished reciting the Qur’ān, he would gather his family and make supplication. It is reported that when Mujāhid, ‘Abda ibn Abi Lubāba and various people were about to complete the recitation, they would summon people since mercy descends at the conclusion of the Qur’ān. It is reported that Ibrāhīm at-Taymī said, “When someone finishes the Qur’ān at the beginning of the day, the angels bless him until evening. When someone finishes the Qur’ān at the beginning of the night, the angels bless him until morning.” He said, “They recommended that it should be finished at the beginning of the night or at the beginning of the day.”

“Part of respect for it is that you should not write the refuge *sūras* from it and then enter the lavatory unless they are inside a covering of leather or silver or something else. Then it is as if it were inside his breast.

“Part of respect for it is that when you write it out [for medicinal purposes] and then drink it, you should say the Name of Allah for every breath and have a very strong intention. Allah will give to you according to your intention. Mujāhid said, ‘There is no harm in writing out the Qur’ān and then having a sick person drink it.’ Abu Ja‘far said, ‘If someone has hardness in his heart, he should write ‘*Yasin*’ on a goblet with saffron and drink it.’

“Part of respect for it is not to say, ‘What a short *sūra*!’ Abū’l-‘Āliyya disliked saying ‘what a short or large *sūra*’. When he heard someone say that, he would retort, ‘You are smaller than it. All of the Qur’ān is immense.’” Abū Dāwūd related the contrary of this from the *ḥadīth* of ‘Amr ibn Shu‘ayb from his grandfather which states that one can use those terms. ‘Amr said, “No small or large *sūra* is part of the *Mufaṣṣal*.”